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The Martyrdom of William Robinson, etc. 1841

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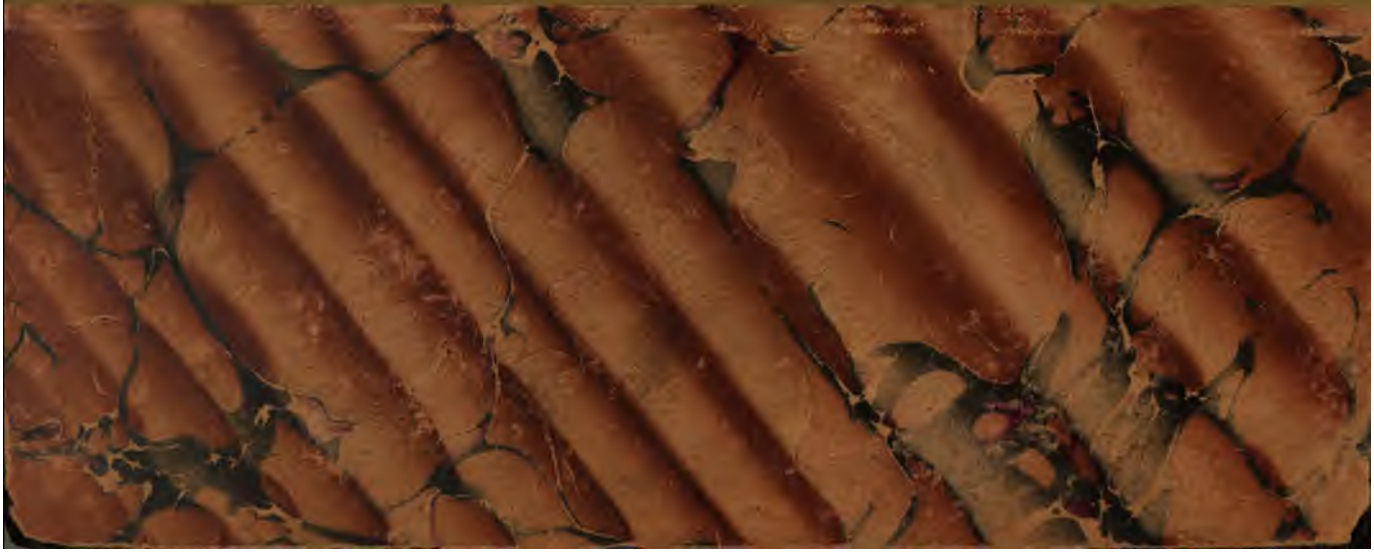

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NARRATIVE

OF THE

MARTYRDOM, AT BOSTON,

OF WILLIAM ROBINSON,
MARMADUKE STEVENSON, MARY DYER, AND
WILLIAM LEDDRA, IN THE YEAR 1659.

WITH SOME PARTICULARS OF THE

JUDGMENTS WHICH BEFEL THEIR PERSECUTORS,

AND THE

STATE OF NEW ENGLAND.

TAKEN FROM

BESSE'S ACCOUNT OF THE SUFFERINGS OF FRIENDS;

AND OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

MANCHESTER:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN HARRISON,

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INTRODUCTION.

NEARLY two centuries have now elapsed since the time of the most vehement persecution against the people, in scorn, called Quakers.

In this day of religious toleration, and comparative ease from outward suffering, it may not be unprofitable to recur to the records of the past, and therein learn the cause and groundwork of perhaps some of the bitterest enmity that ever disgraced mankind.—It may not be unprofitable to mark the patience and constancy with which the Early Friends endured the loss of all things, for *the Word—the Living Eternal Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.* Did they suffer in order to support a mere notion or favourite dogma of religion, or because they were of themselves unwilling to evince proper obedience to the laws of the land? or was it from any real deficiency of respect due to the rulers of the nations in which they dwelt? Far otherwise. Reference to the annals of the society will amply prove, that these sons and daughters of the morning were actuated in all their movements by Religious Principle; or, in other words, by apprehended duty to the law of Right, and the knowledge of the responsibility between the soul of man and his Creator. They were indeed faithful to their Lord, and loyal but honest to their king—certainly not seekers after an earthly but a heavenly crown. And in the discharge of this their all-important duty, they had, in great plainness and simplicity, to warn men every where against the corruptions of the age, especially against spiritual wickedness in high places. And perhaps no one circumstance caused the people to rage more than the faithful testimony they bore in word and action to the iniquitous system of a Hireling *Priesthood.*

What whippings, scourgings, plunderings, imprisonments, banishments, and almost every species of cruel punishments, had they to endure on this account!—and that too, generally at the instigation of the Priest. Many suppose that these hardships should be forgotten now. The query to such will naturally arise, Are the causes of them removed? Does priestcraft with its baneful concomitants cease to exist? Nay verily, the like spirit, though seemingly dormant, is not dead. It continues to live, and wants but its ancient *power* to inflict. Instead of forgetting, we ought to remember with grateful humility, that the Faith, Labours, and *Sufferings* of our predecessors in the Truth, are left upon record for our instruction at this day. We ought to feel very thankful to the Great Disposer of events, that the high privileges *we* enjoy are instrumentally the results of *their* fidelity to the very testimonies and religious principles which we profess; and we ought to search and see, as with the candle of the Lord, how far we are coming up to the standard of Truth, in following them as they followed Christ. FOR GREAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

With respect to the four Martyrs, of whom relation is about to be made, they were strangers, who, having left their nearest and dearest connexions on earth, had gone to the colony of Massachusets, not in their own wills, but in simple obedience to Divine command—they esteeming the reproaches of Christ of greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for that they had respect unto the recompense of reward. These devoted Christians were put to death on no better pretext than that of being "*Quakers*," (as they were reproachfully termed) who believed themselves called to visit and re-visit Boston, notwithstanding the sanguinary enactments made on purpose to prevent them. In fact, the blood-thirsty and unjust Governor, John Endicot, in taking away the lives of these faithful followers of the Lamb, did only fulfil his cruel Pharisaical design, when, alluding to those unjust laws which were made against

the "Quakers" in New England, and for the enforcing of uniformity in religion, and the attendance upon the Established ministers of the state, he said, "*Take heed you break not our ecclesiastical laws, for then ye are sure to stretch by the halter.*"

Reader of any denomination, thou art invited to peruse this brief but heart-rending account, with Christian candour and an impartial mind; by which no doubt thou wilt see that those who persecute and tyrannize over their fellow-creatures for their Faith and way of worship to God,—whatever their glorious pretence to religion, are unlike to true Christians, who, instead of persecuting, were persecuted.—How unlike to the blessed Jesus, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, but told his disciples, when they would have called for fire to come down from heaven on the Samaritans, that he came not to *destroy* men's lives, but to save them. And of whom it is also declared, that never man spake like Him, whose precept to his followers was, "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is *the Law* and the *Prophets.*" Had this divine rule been pursued and obeyed by the magistrates, priests, and government of New England, assuredly those monstrous cruelties which were there practised on a conscientious people, had not been inflicted.

Before commencing the Narrative, it may be well to premise, that these zealous professors, [of New England] who describe themselves *pious, peaceable protestants, driven by severity to leave their native country, and seek refuge for their lives and liberties, with freedom for the worship of God, in a wilderness, in the ends of the earth*—these bloody zealots, invested with power, exercised a cruel dominion over the faith of others; in which they were not quite so inconsistent with themselves as some have thought; because, when under oppression, and pleading for liberty of conscience, they understood it not as the *common right* of mankind, but as *a peculiar privilege of the Orthodox.*

The horrid apostacy of these men, to flee persecution, and yet turn such virulent persecutors themselves,—to them may the quaint couplet of a poet of former times, justly be applied:—

> "This is the Presbyterian moon, which, in the night, *was* light,
> But when to persecution fell, then all was blood and spite."

The first order or law for uniformity in religion in this country, was made in 1646, imposing a penalty of five shillings per week for not coming to hear the Established ministers. This was long before any "Quakers" came thither, the first of whom were two women, whose mistreatment is alluded to by W. Sewel, who says,—"In the 7th month, 1656, when Mary Fisher, and Ann Austin, arrived in the road before Boston, before ever a law was made there against the Quakers; and yet they were very ill-treated; for before they came ashore, the deputy-governor, Richard Billingham, (the governor himself being out of town) sent officers aboard, who searched their trunks and chests, and took away the books they found there, which were about one hundred, and carried them ashore, after having commanded the said women to be kept prisoners aboard; and the said books were, by an order of the council, burnt in the market-place, by the hangman. Afterwards, the deputy-governor had them brought on shore, and committed them by a mittimus to prison as Quakers, upon this proof only, that one of them speaking to him had said *thee* instead of *you*; whereupon he said, he needed no more, for now he saw they were Quakers. And then they were shut up close prisoners, and command was given that none should come to them without leave: a fine of five pounds being laid on any that should otherwise come at or speak with them, though but at the window. Their pens, ink, and paper were taken from them, and they not suffered to have any candle-light in the night season; nay, what is more, they were stripped naked, under pretence to know whether they were witches, though in searching no token was found

upon them but of innocence; and in this search they were so barbarously misused, that modesty forbids to mention it: and that none might have communication with them, a board was nailed up before the window of the jail. And seeing they were not provided with victuals, Nicholas Upshall, one who had lived long in Boston and was a member of the church there, was so concerned about it, liberty being denied to send them provisions, that he purchased food of the jailor at the rate of five shillings a week, lest they should have starved. And after having been about five weeks prisoners, William Chichester, master of a vessel, was bound in one hundred pounds bond to carry them back, and not to suffer any to speak with them, after they were put on board; and the jailor kept their beds, which were brought out of the ship, and their Bible, for his fees.

Such was the entertainment the Quakers first met with at Boston, and that from a people who pretended, that for conscience-sake they had chosen the wilderness of America, before the well-cultivated Old England; though afterwards, when they took away the lives of those called Quakers, they, to excuse their cruel actions, did not stick to say, that at first they had used no punishment against the Quakers.

Scarce a month after the arrival of the aforesaid women at Boston, there came also Christopher Holder, Thomas Thirstone, William Brend, John Copeland, Mary Prince, Sarah Gibbens, Mary Wheathead, and Dorothy Waugh; they were locked up in the same manner as the former, and after about eleven weeks' stay, sent back; Robert Lock, the master of a ship, being compelled to carry these eight persons back on his own charge, and to land them no where but in England; having been imprisoned till he undertook so to do.

The governor, John Endicot, whose blood-thirstiness will appear further on, being now come home, bid them, 'Take heed ye break not our ecclesiastical laws, for then ye are sure to stretch by a halter.'

And when they desired a copy of those laws, it was denied them; which made some of the people say, 'How shall they know when they transgress?' But Endicot remained stiff, having said before, when at Salem, he heard how Ann Austin and Mary Fisher had been dealt with at Boston: 'If I had been there, I would have had them well whipt.'

Then a law was made, prohibiting all masters of ships to bring any Quakers into that jurisdiction, and themselves from coming in, on penalty of the house of correction. When this law was published, Nicholas Upshall, already mentioned, could not forbear to show the persecutors the unreasonableness of their proceedings, warning them to take heed that they were not found fighting against God; and so draw down a *judgment* upon the land. But this was taken so ill, that though he was a member of their church, and of good repute, as a man of an unblameable conversation, yet he was fined in twenty-three pounds, and imprisoned also for not coming to church; and next day they banished him out of their jurisdiction. This fine was exacted so severely, that Endicot said, 'I will not bate him one groat.' And though a weakly old man, yet they allowed him but one month's space for his removal, so that he was forced to depart in the winter.

Coming at length to Rhode Island, he met an Indian Prince, who, having understood how he had been dealt with, behaved himself very kindly, and told him, if he would live with him, he would make him a warm house. And further said, "What a God have the English, who deal so with one another about their God!' For it seems Upshall was already looked upon as one that was departing from his church-membership. But this was but the beginning of the New England persecution, which in time grew so hot, that some of the Quakers were put to death on the gallows, as will be seen by the following pages.

William Robinson, merchant of London; Marmaduke Stevenson, a countryman of Yorkshire, and Mary Dyer, a grave comely woman, fearing the Lord, and of good report, the mother of several children, and a wife of a respectable inhabitant of Rhode Island. These three, together with one Nicholas Davis, were, by the court of assistants at Boston, in the beginning of September, 1659, sentenced to banishment on pain of death: but William Robinson being looked upon as a teacher, was also condemned to be severely whipped: and the Constable was commanded to get an able man to do it. Then William Robinson was brought into the street, and there stripped; and having his hands put through the holes of the carriage of a great gun, where the jailor held him, the executioner gave him twenty stripes, with a three-fold corded whip. Soon after which, he and the other three were released, and banished for no other cause than their being Quakers, which appears by the warrant issued against them.

Now, though Mary Dyer and Nicholas Davis left New England at that time, yet W. Robinson and M. Stevenson only went from Boston, for they had not freedom in their minds to depart from the jurisdiction of New England, though their lives lay at stake. So they went to Salem and some places thereabouts, to visit their friends, and to confirm them in the faith. But it was not long before they were taken and put again into the prison at Boston, and had chains locked on their right legs. In the next month, Mary Dyer also returned; and as she stood near the prison, speaking with Christopher Holder, who was come thither to inquire after a ship bound for England, whither he intended to go, she was also taken into custody. Thus they had now three persons, who, according to their sanguinary law, had forfeited their lives. On the 20th of October, these three were brought into Court, where John Endicot, the Governor, and others were assembled; and being called to the bar, Endicot commanded the keeper to pull off the men's hats, and then said that they

had made several laws to keep the Quakers from amongst them, and neither whipping, nor imprisoning, nor cutting off ears, nor banishing upon pain of death, would keep them from amongst them: and further he said, that he or they desired not the death of any of them. Yet his next words were, "Give ear, and hearken to your sentence of death." William Robinson then desired that he might be permitted to read a paper, giving an account of the reason why he had not departed that jurisdiction. But Endicot would not suffer it to be read, but in a great rage said, "You shall not read it, nor will the court hear it read." Then William Robinson laid it on the table. The paper being handed to Endicot, he read to himself, and then said to William Robinson, "You need not make such ado to have it read, for you spoke yesterday more than is here written." W. Robinson desiring again that the paper might be read, that the people present might hear it, his request was denied; and Endicot said, "William Robinson hearken to your sentence of death: You shall be had back to the place whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, to be hanged on the gallows till you are dead." This sentence had been expected by W. R. a considerable time, he having believed for four months before, that the laying down his life for his religion would be required of him.

William Robinson being taken away, Marmaduke Stevenson was called; and Endicot said to him, "If you have any thing to say, you may speak." He, knowing how they had dealt with his companion, was silent; though he also had written a paper in prison containing the reasons of his being come there, but kept it by him, and found an opportunity afterwards of delivering it to somebody. Then Endicot pronounced sentence of death against him, saying, "Marmaduke Stevenson, you shall be had to the place whence you came, and from thence to the gallows, and then be hanged till you are dead." Whereupon M. Stevenson spake thus, "Give ear ye Magistrates, and all who are guilty, for this the Lord hath said concerning you, and will perform his word upon you: That the same day ye put his servants to death, shall the day of your visitation pass over

your heads, and you shall be cursed for evermore. The mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. Therefore, in love to you all, I exhort you to take warning before it be too late, that so the curse may be removed. For assuredly if you put us to death, you will bring innocent blood upon your own heads, and swift destruction will come upon you." After he had spoken thus, he was taken away, and Mary Dyer was called, to whom Endicot spake thus, "Mary Dyer you shall go to the place from whence you came, (to wit the prison) and from thence to the place of execution, and be hanged until you are dead." To which she replied, "The will of the Lord be done." Then Endicot said, "Take her away, Marshal." To which she returned, "Yea, joyfully I go." And in her going to prison, she often uttered speeches of praises to the Lord; and, being full of joy, she said to the Marshal, he might let her alone, for she would go to the prison without him. To which he answered, "I believe you, Mrs. Dyer, but I must do what I am commanded." Thus she was led to prison with her companions, from whence she writ a letter, directed to the general Court at Boston, laying before them the grievousness of their iniquity, in thus persecuting to death such as the Lord had sent amongst them.

WILLIAM ROBINSON'S PAPER, DELIVERED TO THE COURT AT BOSTON, BEFORE HE RECEIVED SENTENCE, AND WHICH THEY REFUSED TO READ OR HEAR.

"ON the 8th of the Eighth month, 1659, in the after part of the day, in travelling betwixt Newport, in Rhode Island, and Daniel Gold's house, with my dear brother Christopher Holder, the word of the Lord came expressly to me, which did fill me immediately with life and power, and heavenly love, by which he constrained me, and commanded me to pass to the town of Boston, my life to lay down in his will, for the accomplishing of his service, that he had there to perform at the day appointed. To which heavenly voice I presently yielded obedience, not questioning the Lord how he would bring the thing to pass, being I was a child, and obedience was demanded of me by the Lord, who filled me with living strength and power from his heavenly presence, which at that time did mightily overshadow me; and my life at that time did say amen to what the Lord required of me, and had commanded me to do, and willingly I was given up

from that time to this day, the will of the Lord to do and perform, whatever became of my body. For the Lord had said unto me, *My soul shall live in everlasting peace, and my life shall enter into rest, for being obedient to the God of my life.* I being a child, and durst not question the Lord in the least, but rather willing to lay down my life, than to bring dishonour to the Lord. And as the Lord made me willing, dealing gently and kindly with me, as a tender father by a faithful child whom he dearly loves, so the Lord did deal with me, in ministering his life unto me, which gave and gives me strength to perform what the Lord required of me; and still as I did and do stand in need, he ministers and ministereth more strength and virtue, and heavenly power and wisdom, whereby I was and am made strong in God, not fearing what man shall be suffered to do unto me, being filled with heavenly courage, which is meekness and innocence; for the cause is the Lord's that we go in, and the battle is the Lord's: and thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the mighty and the terrible God, 'Not by strength, nor by might, nor by power of man, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts, I will perform what my mouth hath spoken, through my servants, whom I have chosen, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.' Friends, the God of my life, and the God of the whole earth, did lay this thing upon me, for which I now suffer bonds near unto death. He, by his Almighty power and everlasting love, constrained me, and laid this thing upon me; and truly I could not deny the Lord, much less resist the Holy One of Israel. Therefore, all who are ignorant of the motion of the Lord in the inward parts, be not hasty in judging in this matter, lest ye speak evil of the thing ye know not: but of a truth, the Lord God of heaven and earth commanded me by his Spirit, and spake unto me by his Son, whom he hath made Heir of all things; and in his life I live, and in it I shall depart this earthly tabernacle, if unmerciful men be suffered to take it from me. And herein I rejoice that the Lord is with me, the Ancient of days, the Life of the suffering seed, for which I am freely given up, and singly do I stand in the will of God; for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. And truly I have great desire and will herein, knowing that the Lord is with me, whatever ignorant men shall be able to say against me; for the witness of the Spirit I have received, and the presence of the Lord and his heavenly Life doth accompany me, so that I can say in truth, and from an upright heart, 'Blessed be the Lord God of my life, who hath counted me worthy, and called me hereunto, to bear my testimony against ungodly and unrighteous men, who seek to take away the life of the righteous without a cause, as the rulers of Massachusets Bay do intend, if the Lord stop them not from their intent.' Oh! hear ye rulers, and give ear and listen all ye that

have any hand herein to put the innocent to death; for in the name, and fear, and dread of the Lord God, I here declare the cause of my staying here amongst you, and continuing in the jurisdiction after there was a sentence of banishment upon pain of death, as ye said, pronounced against me without a just cause, as ye all know, that we that were banished committed nothing worthy of banishment, nor of any punishment, much less banishment upon pain of death. And now, ye rulers, ye do intend to put me to death, and my companion, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, 'Go to Boston with thy brother William Robinson:' unto which command he was obedient, who had said unto him, He had a great work for him to do. Which thing is now seen, and the Lord is now a doing of it; and it is in obedience to the Lord the God of the whole earth, that we continued amongst you; and that we came to the town of Boston again, in obedience to the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whose hand your breath is; and will ye put us to death for obeying the Lord, the God of the whole earth? Well, if ye do this act, and put us to death, know this, and be it known unto you all, ye rulers and people within this jurisdiction, *That whosoever hath an hand therein, will be guilty of innocent blood. And not only upon yourselves will ye bring innocent blood, but upon the town, and the inhabitants thereof, and every where within this jurisdiction, that had the least hand therein.* Therefore be instructed, ye rulers of this land, and take warning betimes, and learn wisdom, before it be hid from your eyes."

"Written in the Common Gaol, the 19th of the Eighth month, 1659, in Boston, by one who feareth the Lord, who is by ignorant people called a Quaker, and unto such I am only known by the name of William Robinson, yet a new name have I received, which such know not."

MARMADUKE STEVENSON'S PAPER OF HIS CALL TO THE WORK AND SERVICE OF THE LORD: GIVEN FORTH BY HIM A LITTLE BEFORE HE WAS PUT TO DEATH, AND AFTER HE HAD RECEIVED HIS SENTENCE.

"IN the beginning of the year 1655, I was at the plough, in the East parts of Yorkshire, in Old England, near the place where my outward being was, and as I walked after the plough, I was filled with the love and presence of the living God, which did ravish my heart when I felt it; for it did increase and abound in me like a living stream, so did the life and love of God run through me like precious ointment giving a pleasant smell, which made me to stand still. And as I stood a little still, with my heart and mind stayed upon the Lord, the word of the Lord came to me in a still small Voice, which I did hear perfectly, saying to me, in the secret of my heart and conscience, 'I have ordained thee a prophet unto the

nations;' and at the hearing of the word of the Lord, I was put to a stand, seeing that I was but a child for such a weighty matter. So at the time appointed, Barbadoes was set before me, unto which I was required of the Lord to go, and leave my dear and loving wife and tender children; for the Lord said unto me, immediately by his Spirit, that 'He would be as an husband to my wife, and as a father to my children; and they should not want in my absence, for he would provide for them when I was gone.' And I believed the Lord would perform what he had spoken, because I was made willing to give up myself to his work and service; to leave all, and follow Him whose presence and life is with me, where I rest in peace and quietness of spirit (with my dear brother) under the shadow of his wings; who hath made us willing to lay down our lives for his Name's sake, if unmerciful men be suffered to take them from us; and if they do, we know we shall have peace and rest with the Lord for ever in his holy habitation, when they shall have torment night and day. So in obedience to the living God, I made preparation to pass to Barbadoes, in the Fourth month, 1658. So after some time that I had been on the said Island, in the service of God, I heard that New England had made a law to put the servants of the living God to death, if they returned after they were sentenced away, which did come near me at that time. And as I considered the thing, and pondered it in my heart, immediately came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, 'Thou knowest not but thou mayst go thither.' But I kept this word in my heart, and did not declare it to any until the time appointed. So after that, a vessel was made ready for Rhode Island, which I passed in. So after a little time that I had been there, visiting the seed which the Lord had blessed, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Go to Boston with thy brother William Robinson;' and at his command I was obedient, and gave up to his will, that so his work and service may be accomplished: for He had said unto me, that He had a great work for me to do, which is now come to pass. And for yielding obedience to, and for obeying the voice and command of the everlasting God, which created heaven and earth, and the fountains of water, do I, with my dear brother, suffer outward bonds, near unto death. And this is given forth to be upon record, that all people may know who hear it—That we came not in our own wills; but in the will of God. Given forth by me, who am known to men by the name of MARMADUKE STEVENSON.

But have a new name given me, which the world knows not of, written in the Book of Life."

"Written in the Boston Prison, in the Eighth month, 1659."

A Copy of a Letter sent by Mary Dyer to the Rulers of Boston, after she had received sentence of Death.

To the General Court now at Boston.

"Whereas I am by many charged with the guiltiness of my own blood. If you mean in my coming to Boston, I am therein clear, and justified by the Lord, in whose will I came, who will require my blood of you, be sure, who have made a law to take away the lives of the innocent servants of God, if they come among you, who are called by you cursed Quakers; although I say, and am a living witness for them, and the Lord, that he hath blessed them, and sent them unto you. Therefore be not found fighters against God, but let my counsel and request be accepted with you, to repeal all such laws, that the Truth and servants of the Lord may have free passage amongst you, and you be kept from shedding innocent blood, which I know there are many among you would not do, if they knew it so to be. Nor can the enemy, that stirreth you up thus to destroy this holy Seed, in any measure countervail the great damage that you will, by thus doing, procure. Therefore, seeing the Lord hath not hid it from me, it lieth upon me, in love to your souls, thus to persuade you: I have no self-ends, the Lord knoweth, for if my life were freely granted by you, it would not avail me; nor could I expect it of you, so long as I should daily hear or see the sufferings of these people, my dear brethren, and seed with whom my life is bound up, as I have done these two years: and now it is like to increase even unto death, for no evil doing, but coming among you. Was ever the like laws heard of among a people that profess Christ come in the flesh? And have such no other weapons but such laws to fight with against spiritual wickedness, as you call it? Wo is me for you! Of whom take you counsel? Search with the light of Christ in you, and it will show you of whom, as it hath done me, and many more, who have been disobedient and deceived, as now you are; which Light, as you come into, and obey what is made manifest to you therein, you will not repent that you were kept from shedding blood, though by a woman. It's not mine own life I seek, (for I chose rather to suffer with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of Egypt) but the life of the Seed, which I know the Lord hath blessed; and therefore seeks the enemy thus vehemently the life thereof to destroy, as in all ages he ever did. Oh! hearken not unto him, I beseech you, for the Seed's sake, which is one in all, and is dear in the sight of God, which they that touch, touch the apple of his eye, and cannot escape his wrath; whereof I having felt, cannot but persuade all men that I have to do withal, especially you,

who name the Name of Christ, to depart from such iniquity, as *Shedding Blood, even of the Saints of the Most High.* Therefore let my request have as much acceptance with you, if you be Christians, as Esther's had with Ahasuerus, whose relation is short of that that is between Christians; and my request is the same that her's was; and he said not that he had made a law, and it would be dishonourable for him to revoke it; but when he understood that these people were so prized by her, (as in truth these are to me) you may see what he did for her. Therefore I leave these lines with you, appealing to the faithful and true witness of God, which is one in all consciences, before whom we must all appear, with whom I shall eternally rest, in everlasting joy and peace, whether you will hear or forbear: with Him is my reward, with whom to live is my joy, and to die is my gain, though I had not had your forty-eight hours' warning for the preparation to the death of Mary Dyer.

And know this also, that if through the enmity you shall declare yourselves worse than Ahasuerus, and confirm your law, though it were but the taking away the life of but one of us, that the Lord will overthrow both your law and you, by his righteous judgments and plagues poured justly upon you; who now, whilst you are warned thereof, and tenderly sought unto, may avoid the one by removing the other. If you neither hear, nor obey the Lord nor his servants, yet will he send more of his servants among you, so that your ends shall be frustrated, that think to restrain them you call cursed Quakers, from coming among you, by any thing you can do to them; yea, verily, he hath a Seed here among you, from whom we have suffered all this while, and yet suffer; whom the Lord of the harvest will send forth more labourers to gather (out of the mouths of the devourers of all sorts) into his fold, where he will lead them into fresh pastures, even the paths of righteousness, for his Name's sake. Oh! let none of you put this day far from you, which, verily, in the Light of the Lord, I see approaching even to many in and about Boston, which is the bitterest and darkest professing place; and so to continue so long as you have done, that ever I heard of; let the time past therefore suffice for such a profession as brings forth such fruits as these laws are. In love and in the spirit of meekness I again beseech you, for I have no enmity to the persons of any; but you shall know that God will not be mocked, but what you sow, that shall ye reap from him, that will render to every one according to the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil: Even so be it, saith

MARY DYER."

A copy of Mary Dyer's letter was delivered to the general Court, after she had received sentence of death. Thus these

pious confessors were not wanting to warn their persecutors of the evil of their doings, in a spirit of Christian love and meekness, and with a courage and fortitude of mind, able to endure afflictions and death itself for the sake of religion and a good conscience, being supported by the power and spirit of Christ, which never faileth those that put their trust in him.

The day appointed by the Court for the execution of their bloody sentence, was the 27th of October, 1659, when in the afternoon, the condemned persons were led to the gallows, by Michaelson, the marshal, and captain James Oliver, with a band of about two hundred armed men, besides many horsemen, as if they were afraid that some of the people would have rescued the prisoners. And that no actors in this *tragical scene* might be wanting, the priest Wilson joined the company, who had been an exciter of the Court to their rigorous procedure, and when they were deliberating what to do with the Quakers, said, "hang them, or else"—drawing his finger across his throat, as if he would have said, despatch them that way.

Now the procession began, and a drummer going next before the condemned, when any of them attempted to speak, the drums were beaten. Glorious signs of heavenly joy and gladness, were beheld in the countenances of the three persons, who walked hand in hand, Mary being in the middle, which made the Marshal say to her, who was advanced in years, "are not you ashamed to walk thus hand in hand betwixt two young men?" She replied, "No—this is to me an hour of the greatest joy I ever had in this world: no ear can hear, no tongue can utter, and no heart can understand, the sweet incomes or influences, and the refreshings of the Spirit of the Lord, which now I feel." Thus going along, William Robinson said, "this is your hour, and the power of darkness;" but presently the drums were beaten; yet shortly after, the drummers ceasing, Marmaduke Stevenson said, "this is the day of your visitation, wherein the Lord hath visited you." More he spake but could not be understood, because of the drums beating again; yet they went on with great cheerfulness, as going to an everlasting wedding, and rejoicing that the Lord had counted them worthy to suffer death for his name's sake. When they were

come near the gallows, the Priest in a taunting manner said to W. Robinson, "Shall such Jacks as you come in before authority with their hats on?" To which W. Robinson replied, "Mind you, mind you, it is for the not putting off the hat, we are put to death." Being come to the ladder, they took leave of each other with tender embraces; and then W. Robinson cheerfully stept up the ladder, and said to the people, "This is the day of your visitation. wherein the Lord hath visited you. This is the day the Lord hath risen in mighty power, to be avenged of all his adversaries." He also signified, that he suffered not as an evil-doer; and desired the spectators to mind the Light that was in them, to wit, the Light of Christ, of which he testified, and was now going to seal it with his blood. This so incensed the envious Priest, that he said "Hold thy tongue, be silent, thou art going to die with a lie in thy mouth." The rope being now about his neck, the executioner bound his hands and legs, and tied his neck-cloth about his face; which being done, W. Robinson said, "Now ye are made manifest;" and the executioner being about turning him off, he said, "I suffer for Christ, in whom I live, and for whom I die." He being turned off, Marmaduke Stevenson stepped up the ladder, and said, "Be it known unto all this day, that we suffer not as evil-doers, but for conscience-sake." And when the hangman was about to turn him off, he said, "This day shall we be at rest with the Lord."

Mary Dyer seeing her companions hanging dead before her, also stepped up the ladder, but after her coats were tied about her feet, the halter put about her neck, and her face covered with a handkerchief, which Wilson, the priest, lent the hangman, a cry was heard, "Stop, for she is reprieved." Her feet then being loosed, they bid her come down; but she, whose mind was already in heaven, stood still, and said, "She was there willing to suffer as her brethren did, unless they would annul their wicked law." What she said was little regarded, but they pulled her down, and the Marshal and others taking her by the arms, carried her to prison again. That she was thus reprieved, was through the intercession of her son, to whom it seems they could not then resolve to deny the favor.

When the people returned from the execution, many seemed sad and heavy, and coming to the draw-bridge, one end of it fell, and several were hurt, but especially a wicked woman, who had reviled the said two persons at their death; but now she was so bruised, that the flesh rotted from her bones, which became so offensive, that the people could not endure to be with her; in which miserable condition she died. But the magistrates took little notice of this, still hardening their hearts. And the priest Wilson extended his malice so far, as to make a ballad on the executed.

The pious speeches, Christian demeanour, faith, constance, and innocence of these two at their execution, so wrought upon John Chamberlain, an inhabitant of Boston, then present, that being convinced of the Truth they died for, he went to visit others of that persuasion then in prison, which the cruel magistrates so resented, that they imprisoned him also, and afterwards whipped him several times most cruelly.

Also, Edward Wharton, an inhabitant of Salem, having said, that the guilt of W. Robinson and M. Stevenson's blood was so great that he could not bear it, and, therefore, testified against their persecutors, was, for that pretended sauciness, whipped with twenty lashes, and fined £20.

There were at that time, prisoners in Boston, eleven others, viz. Christopher Holder, Daniel Gould, Robert Harper, William King, Margaret Smith, Mary Trask, Provided Southick, Alice Cowland, Hannah Phelps, Mary Scott, and Hope Clifton. The first of these, at a court held in the next month, was sentenced to banishment on pain of death; the next six were sentenced to be whipped; and the other four were by the governor admonished to depart the colony.

The magistrates perceiving that their putting W. Robinson and M. Stevenson to death, caused much discontent amongst the people, resolved to send away Mary Dyer, thinking thereby to calm their minds a little. So they caused her to be set on horseback, and by four horsemen conveyed fifteen miles toward Rhode Island, who left her there with a horse and a man to be conveyed the rest of the way, but she soon sent them back, and so went to her own home.

The next day after her reprieve, viz. on the 28th October, she writ the following letter to the Court, viz.:—

"Once more to the general Court assembled in Boston speaks Mary Dyer, even as before: My life is not accepted, neither availeth me, in comparison of the lives and liberty of the Truth and servants of the living God, for which in the bowels of love and meekness I sought you; yet, nevertheless, with wicked hands have you put two of them to death, which makes me to feel that the mercies of the wicked are cruelty. I rather choose to die than to live, as from you, as guilty of their innocent blood. Therefore, seeing my request is hindered, I leave you to the Righteous Judge and Searcher of all hearts, who, with the pure measure of light he hath given every man to profit withal, will, in his due time, let you see whose servants you are, and of whom you have taken counsel, which I desire you to search into: But all His counsel hath been slighted, and you would none of His reproofs. Read your portion, Prov. i. 24 to 32. For verily the night cometh on you apace, wherein no man can work, in which you shall assuredly fall to your own Master. In obedience to the Lord, whom I serve with my spirit, and pity to your souls, which you neither know nor pity, I can do no less than once more warn you to put away the evil of your doings, and kiss the Son, the light in you, before his wrath be kindled in you; for where it is, nothing without you can help or deliver you out of his hand at all; and if these things be not so, then say, *There hath been no prophet from the Lord amongst you:* Though we be nothing, yet it is His pleasure, by things that are not, to bring to nought things that are.

"When I heard your last order read, it was a disturbance unto me, that was so freely offering up my life to Him that gave it me, and sent me hither so to do; which obedience being his own work, he gloriously accompanied with his presence, and peace, and love in me, in which I rested from my labour, till by your order and the people, I was so far disturbed, that I could not retain any more of the words thereof, than that *I should return to prison, and there remain forty and eight hours;* to which I submitted, finding nothing from the Lord to the contrary, that I may know what his pleasure and counsel is concerning me, on whom I wait therefore, for he is my life and the length of my days; and as I said before, I came at his command, and I go at his command. MARY DYER."

Being thus returned home from prison, she went afterwards to Long Island, and tarried there most part of the winter, and then coming home again, found herself under a necessity, laid

on her from the requirings of the Spirit of the Lord, to go back again to Boston in the beginning of the next year, and went accordingly, Anno 1660.

On the 21st of the Third month she came again to Boston, and on the 31st of the same, was sent for by the general court; being come, Endicot, the governor, said, "Are you the same Mary Dyer that was here before?" And it seems he was preparing an evasion for her, there having been another of that name lately come from England. But she, far from any disguise, undauntedly answered, "I am the same Mary Dyer that was here the last general court." Then Endicot said, "You will own yourself a Quaker, will you not?" To which she answered, "I own myself to be reproachfully called so." Then the jailer, who would also say something, said, "She is a vagabond." Then Endicot said, "The sentence was passed upon her the last general court, and now likewise; you must return to the prison, and there remain till to-morrow at nine o'clock; then from thence you must go to the gallows, and there be hanged till you are dead." To which she answered, "This is no more than what thou saidst before." Endicot replied, "But now it is to be executed, therefore prepare yourself to-morrow at nine o'clock." She then spoke thus:—"I came in obedience to the will of God, the last general court, desiring you to repeal your unrighteous laws for banishment on pain of death; and that same is my work now, and earnest request; although I told you, that if you refused to repeal them, the Lord would send others of his servants to witness against them." Hereupon Endicot asked her, whether she was a prophetess? She answered, "She spoke the words that the Lord spoke to her, and now the thing was come to pass." And beginning to speak of her call, Endicot cried, "Away with her! Away with her!" So she was brought to the prison house, and kept there shut up until the next day.

About the time appointed, the marshal, Michaelson, came, and called for her to come hastily; and coming into the room where she was, she desired him to stay a little, and speaking mildly said, she would be ready presently. But he, being of

a rough temper, said, he could not wait upon her, but she should now wait upon him. One Margaret Smith, her companion, being grieved to see such hard-heartedness, spoke something against their unjust laws and proceedings: to which he said, "You shall have your share of the same." Then Mary Dyer was brought forth, and with a band of soldiers led through the town, the drums being beaten before and behind her, and so continued, that none might hear her speak all the way to the place of execution, which was about a mile. Thus guarded she came to the gallows, and being gone up the ladder, some said to her, that if she would return, she might come down and save her life. To which she replied, "Nay, I cannot; for in obedience to the will of the Lord I came, and in His will I abide faithful to death." Then captain John Webb said, that "She had been there before, and had the sentence of banishment upon pain of death, and had broken the law in coming again now, and, therefore, she was guilty of her own blood." To which she returned, "Nay, I came to keep blood-guiltiness from you, desiring you to repeal the unrighteous and unjust law of banishment upon pain of death, made against the innocent servants of the Lord; therefore my blood will be required at your hands who wilfully do it; but for those that do it in the simplicity of their hearts, I desire the Lord to forgive them. I came to do the will of my Father, and in obedience to his will, I stand even to death." Then priest Wilson said, "Mary Dyer, O repent! O repent! and be not so deluded, and carried away by the deceit of the devil." To this she answered, "Nay, man, I am not now to repent." And being asked by some, whether she would have the elders pray for her? she said, "I know no elder here." Being further asked, whether she would have any of the people pray for her, she said, "I desire the prayers of all the people of God." Thereupon some scoffingly said, "It may be she thinks there are none here." To which she replied, "I know but few here." Then they spoke to her again, that one of the elders might pray for her, to which she replied, "Nay—first a child, then a young man, then a strong man, before an elder

in Christ Jesus." After this she was charged with something, which was not understood what it was, but she seemed to hear it, for she said, "'Tis false, 'tis false, I never spoke those words." Then one mentioned, that she should have said, she had been in paradise. To which she answered, "Yea, I have been in paradise these several days." And more she spoke of the eternal happiness, into which she was now to enter. Thus Mary Dyer departed this life, a constant and faithful martyr of Christ, having been twice led to death, which the first time she expected, with an entire resignation of mind to the will of God, and now suffered with Christian fortitude, being raised above the fear of death, through a blessed hope, and a glorious assurance of eternal life and immortality.

We now proceed to give an Account of the Sufferings and Death of WILLIAM LEDDRA, of Barbadoes, who, after several barbarous whippings, and such a close confinement in Boston prison, as was thought designed either to suffocate or starve him, was at length sentenced to banishment on pain of death. He nevertheless soon returned; and coming publicly to Boston, to visit the Friends he had left there in prison, was apprehended, and kept night and day in an open prison, chained to a log of wood, during an extreme hard winter, colder than the severest seasons we have in England. During that hard confinement of body, he enjoyed a Christian freedom and liberty of spirit, wherein he was enlarged, in brotherly love, to write the following letter. [The letter is too long for insertion here; it nevertheless indicates that the author's mind was wholly given up to serve the Lord. It is well worthy of perusal. See Besse's Sufferings, Vol. 2, page 214.]

Thus this excellent man [as the letter implies] having his mind abstracted from the world and the things thereof, for the hope that was set before him, was enabled to endure tribulation, and to bear with patience whatsoever afflictions it should please God to suffer to come upon him in this world, not counting his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy.

In the first month, 1661, the Court of Assistants being held at Boston, he was brought thither with his chain and log at his

heels. Being placed at the bar he was told, that, having returned after sentence of banishment, he had incurred the penalty of death by the law. He asked them, what evil he had done. The Court answered, "He had owned those that were put to death, and said they were innocent; had refused to put off his hat in court, and would say *thee* and *thou;* for these were the marks they distinguished Quakers by, and which they counted a sufficient ground for the sentence of banishment on pain of death." He replied, "*Will ye put me to death for speaking English, and for not putting off my clothes?*" Major General Denison answered, "A man may speak treason in English." William returned, "Is it treason to say *thee* and *thou* to a single person?" Simon Broadstreet, a violent persecutor, said, "Will you go for England?" William answered, "I have no business there." Simon Broadstreet replied, "Then you shall go that way"—(pointing to the gallows.) William again asked them, "What! will you put me to death for breathing the air in your jurisdiction? What have you against me? I appeal to the laws of England for my trial; if by them I am guilty, I refuse not to die." The Court would not accept his appeal, but attempted to persuade him to a recantation, and compliance with their will." To which he answered, with remarkable magnanimity, "What! to join with such murderers as you are!—then let every man that meets me say, '*Lo! this is the man that hath forsaken the God of his salvation!*'"

The Court then passed sentence of death upon him, and appointed the 14th day of the same month for his execution.

The day before he was put to death, he wrote the following letter to his friends:—

"TO THE SOCIETY OF THE LITTLE FLOCK OF CHRIST, GRACE AND PEACE BE MULTIPLIED.

"*Most dear and inwardly beloved,*

"The sweet influences of the morning star, like a flood, distilling into my innocent habitation, hath so filled me with the joy of the Lord in the beauty of holiness, that my spirit is as if it did not inhabit a tabernacle of clay, but is wholly swallowed up in the bosom of eternity, from where it had its being.

Alas! alas! What can the wrath and spirit of man that lusteth to envy, aggravated by the heat and strength of the king of locusts, which came out of the pit, do unto one that is hid in the secrets of the Almighty; or unto them that are gathered under the healing wings of the Prince of Peace?—Under whose armour of light they shall be able to stand in the day of trial, having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit, which is their weapon of war against spiritual wickedness, principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, both within and without. Oh! my beloved, I have waited like a dove at the windows of the Ark, and have stood still in that watch, which the Master, without whom I could do nothing, did at his coming, reward with the fulness of his love, wherein my heart did rejoice, that I might, in the love and life of God, speak a few words to you, sealed with the spirit of promise, that the taste thereof might be a savour of life to your life, and a testimony in you of my innocent death. And if I had been altogether silent, and the Lord had not opened my mouth unto you, yet he would have opened your hearts, and there have sealed my innocence with the streams of life, by which we are all baptized into that body which is of God, with whom and in whose presence there is life, in which, as you abide, you stand upon the pillar and ground of Truth: for the Life being the Truth and the Way, go not one step without it, lest you should compass a mountain in the wilderness; for unto every thing there is a season. As the flowing of the ocean doth fill every creek and branch thereof, and then retires again towards its own being and fullness, and leaves a savour behind it, so doth the life and virtue of God flow into every one of your hearts, whom He hath made partakers of his Divine nature; and when it withdraws but a little, it leaves a sweet savour behind it that many can say they are made clean through the Word that he hath spoken to them. In which innocent condition you may see what you are, in the presence of God, and what you are without him. Therefore, my dear hearts, let the enjoyment of the life alone be your hope, your joy and consolation, and let the man of God flee those things that would lead the mind out of the Cross, for then the savour of life will be buried. And though some may speak of things that they received in the life, as experiences, yet the life being veiled, and the savour of it left behind, washed away by the fresh flood of temptation, the condition that they did enjoy in the life, boasted of by the airy thing, will be like the manna that was gathered yesterday, without any good scent or savour: for it was only well with the man while he was in the life of innocency, but being driven from the presence of the Lord into the earth, what can he boast of? And although you know these things, and many of

you much more than I can say, yet for the love and zeal I bear to the truth and honour of God, and tender desire of my soul to those that are young, that they may read me in that from which I write, to strengthen them against the wiles of the subtle serpent that beguiled Eve; I say, stand in the watch within, in the fear of the Lord, which is the very entrance of wisdom, and the state wherein you are ready to receive the secrets of the Lord. Hunger and thirst patiently, be not weary, neither doubt, stand still and cease from thine own working, and in due time thou shalt enter into the rest, and thy eyes shall behold His salvation, whose testimonies are sure, and righteous altogether. Let them be as a seal upon thine arm, and as jewels about thy neck, that others may see what the Lord has done to your souls. Confess him before men, yea before his greatest enemies; fear not what they can do unto you; greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: for He will clothe you with humility, and in the power of his meekness. You shall reign over all the rage of your enemies, in the favour of God, wherein, as you stand in faith, ye are the salt of the earth; for many seeing your good works, many glorify God in the day of their visitation. Take heed of receiving that which you saw not in the Light, lest ye give ear to the enemy. Bring all things to the Light, that they may be proved whether they are wrought in God. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, are without the Light in the world; therefore possess your vessels in all sanctification and honour, and let your eye look at the mark. He that hath called you is holy. And if there be an eye that offends, pluck it out and cast it from you. Let not temptation take hold, for if you do it will keep you from the favour of God, and that will be a sad state; for without grace possessed, there is no assurance of salvation. By grace you are saved, and the witnessing of it is sufficient for you; to which I commend you all, my dear friends, and in it remain

Your Brother,

WILLIAM LEDDRA."

"Boston Goal, the 13th of 1st Month, 1660-1."

Having thus religiously taken leave of his friends, on the next day, viz., the 14th of the same month, the unrighteous sentence pronounced against him was put in execution, after the following manner:—

A morning lecture was appointed, in which the Priest was not backward to animate the magistrates to execute their intended tragedy. Their pretended worship being over, the Gover-

nor, with a guard of soldiers, came to prison; whereupon the prisoner's irons were knocked off, and he taking a solemn leave of his fellow-prisoners for the same testimony, being called. cheerfully came forth. The guard instantly surrounded him, to prevent any of his friends coming near to speak to him; at which Edward Wharton being much grieved, said to them, "Friends! what will ye show yourselves worse than Bonnor's bloody brood? Will you not let me come near my suffering Friend, before you kill him?" Whereupon one of the company said, "O Edward! it will be your turn next;" he being under sentence of banishment: and one of the officers threatened to stop his mouth, if he spake a word more. However, he and some other Friends went as near as the guards would permit them.

Being come to the place of execution, the patient, lamb-like sufferer, as he was ascending the ladder, took his leave of his friend Edward Wharton, to whom he said, "All that will be Christ's disciples, must take up His Cross." And, standing where the guard ordered him, with an exceeding fresh and lively countenance, he spake to the people, and said, "For bearing my testimony for the Lord, against the deceivers and the deceived, am I brought here to suffer;" at which many of the people seemed to be much affected with sorrow. This was observed by one Allen, a priest, then present, who, to quench that tenderness, cried out, "People, I would not have you think it strange to see a man willing to die, for it is no new thing. And you may read how the Apostle saith, 'That some should be given up to strong delusions, and even dare to die for for it.'" Though the text doth not say so, but the blind zeal of the man hurried him into a perversion of the Scripture, that he might harden the people's hearts against the innocent; who, standing as a man gathered up to God, and in peace with him, as the executioner was putting the halter about his neck, meekly said, "I commend my righteous cause unto Thee, Oh God!" And as the ladder was turning, he cried out, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

Being dead when the executioner cut him down, four of his

friends, Edward Wharton, Robert Harper, John Chamberlain, and Phillip Verrin, caught his body in their arms, and laid it on the ground till the executioner had stripped the clothes off; who, when he had so done, said, that "He was a comely man, and that Mary Dyer was a comely woman; and the others, well-ordered men, according to their years." His body being stripped, his said friends were suffered to put it into a coffin, and bury it where they thought meet: a piece of humanity, owing, not to the inclinations of the persecutors, but to the outcry of the people against the barbarity used to the dead bodies of the two men who were put to death before,—[viz., Marmaduke Stevenson, and William Robinson.]

Thus died William Leddra, whom we leave resting in peace from his labours, and reaping the fruits of his meekness, patience, and other Christian virtues, which were conspicuous in the course of his life, and enabled him to meet his death with intrepidity.

At the same court, where W. Leddra received sentence of death, Edward Wharton was also brought before their judgment-seat: he had, about a year before, been taken from his own house by a warrant in the following form—

"*To the Constables of Salem, or either of them.*

"You are required, in His Majesty's name, to apprehend the body of E. Wharton, and him safely to bring before me, to answer such objections as shall be laid unto him concerning the Quakers." "JOHN ENDICOT."

The constable accordingly brought him through the country to Boston, as some notorious offender: being brought before the Governor, Edward asked what he had now to lay to his charge. The Governor made a discourse to him about taking off his hat, and pretended to pity him, and be sorry to see him so deluded, though all this semblance of pity was mere words. for he had sent for him on purpose to commit him to prison. Edward replied, that the wearing of his hat was no just cause for persecuting him, that the Truth deluded no man, and that by the Grace of God he was made willing to suffer for His

names' sake, which Grace he witnessed in his measure. The governor scoffingly answered "In my measure? This is right—The Quakers' words. Hast thou grace?" "Yes," replied Edward. —"How dost thou know that thou hast grace?" Edward answered, "He that believeth on the Son of God, needs not go to others to know, for he hath the witness in himself, as saith John, and this witness is the Spirit." The governor ordering the jailer to be sent for, Edward insisted on his assigning a cause for his commitment, saying, "Since thou hast sent the warrant, and caused the constable to take me out of my house, and led me through the country from town to town like an evil-doer, I would like to know what thou hast to lay to my charge." "Nay," replied the governor, "You shall know afterwards!" And so commanded the jailer to take him away to prison, where he was kept close, night and day, with W. Leddra, sometimes in a very little room, little bigger than a saw-pit, having no liberty granted them.

Being brought again before their court, he again asked, "What is the cause, and wherefore have I been fetched from my habitation, where I was following my honest calling, and here laid up as an evil-doer?" They told him, that his hair was too long, and that he had disobeyed that commandment which saith, Honour thy father and thy mother. He asked, "wherein?" "In that you will not," said they, "put off your hat to magistrates." Edward replied, "I love and own all magistrates and rulers, who are for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

Secretary Rawson.—Edward Wharton come to the bar.

Edward Wharton.—Yea, and to the bench too, for thou hast no evil justly to lay to our charge.

Secretary.—Hold up your hand.

E. W.—I will not: thou hast no evil to charge me with.

Secretary.—E. Wharton, hear your sentence of banishment.

E. W.—Have a care what you do, for if you murder me, my blood will be heavy upon you.

Secretary.—E. Wharton attend to your sentence of banishment: you are upon pain of death to depart this jurisdiction, it

being the 11th of this instant, (March) by the one and twentieth of the same—on the pain of death.

E. W.—Friends I am a single man, and I have dealings with some people; it were good I had time to make clear with all, and then if you have power to murder me, you may.

Then the governor and secretary laid their heads together.

Governor.—If we should give him a hundred days it is all one.

E. W.—Nay, I shall not go away; therefore be careful what you do.

The court being very full of people, E. W., with a raised voice, spake thus: "All people, take notice what horrible, wicked, and unjust men these are, for after they had unrighteously taken me from my house, where, when the constable came in, I was following my honest calling in the fear of the Lord, he forced me out, and led me along the country, with his black staff, like some evil doer, to the governor's house, when I asked the governor, what he had to charge me withal? he said, you shall know hereafter. And now they have kept me almost a year, close prisoner, night and day; they have banished me on pain of death, and for ought I know they will murder me; and yet they have nothing to charge me withal *but my hat and my hair*!!"

Whereupon Rawson, the secretary, taking the book of records, read to the people, how, that contrary to law, E. Wharton had travelled up and down, with W. Robinson and M. Stevenson. To which E. replied, "What readest thou that for? Have ye not ploughed furrows on my back for that already, although you had no law for it? This he said in relation to his having been cruelly whipped in 1659, and fined £20 for travelling in company with the said W. Robinson and M. Stevenson.

Rawson being so repulsed, Bellingham the deputy governor, stood up, and threatened Edward Wharton to send him to prison, and to have him whipped again, and commanded him immediately to depart the court, which he did; but notwithstanding their cruel sentence, continued in their jurisdiction, publicly attending his friend W. Leddra at his death; as did also, John Chamberlain, and Robert Harper; though they also,

at the same court, were sentenced to banishment on pain of death: and the said R. Harper's wife was also banished on pain of imprisonment.

But above all, most eminently remarkable was the Christian courage and magnanimity of WENLOCK CHRISTISON, who having been banished upon pain of death, not only returned, as it were with his life in his hand, to Boston, but openly came into the court there at the time when they were passing sentence of death on W. Leddra. His appearance there struck the court with a sudden damp and consternation, so that for some time there was a general silence. But anon, recovering themselves, they ordered him to be brought to the bar.

The marshal bid him to pull of his hat.

Wenlock.—No I shall not.

Secretary Rawson.—Is not your name Wenlock Christison?

Wenlock.—Yes.

Gov. Endicot.—Wast thou not banished upon pain of death?

Wenlock.—Yea I was.

Governor.—What dost thou here then?

Wenlock.—I am come to warn you, that you should shed no more innocent blood, for the blood that you have shed already, cries to the Lord for vengeance to come upon you.

Whereupon the governor ordered to take him into custody.

On the day that W. Leddra was executed, the court sat again, and thinking to terrify Wenlock by the example of William's death, sent for him; where both the governor Endicot, and his deputy Bellingham, endeavoured to daunt that valiant confessor with bloody menaces, telling him, that except he would renounce his religion, he should surely die. But he, not at all dismayed, answered thus, "Nay, I shall not change my religion, nor seek to save my life; neither do I intend to deny my Master, but if I lose my life for Christ's sake, and the preaching of the gospel, I shall save it." This undaunted reply so struck them for the present, that after a few words they sent him to prison again, there to be kept till the next court; which was to be in the latter-end of the third month, and the beginning of the fourth

month, Anno. 1661. At the said next general court, Wenlock Christison was again brought to the bar.

The governor asked him, what he had to say for himself, why he should not die.

Wenlock.—I have done nothing worthy of death; if I had, I refuse not to die.

Governor.—Thou art come in among us in rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft, and ought to be punished.

Wenlock.—I came not in among you in rebellion, but in obedience to the God of heaven; not in contempt to any of you, but in love to your souls and bodies; and that you shall know one day, when you and all men must give an account of your deeds done in the body. Take heed, for you cannot escape the righteous judgments of God.

Major-general Adderton.—You pronounce woes and judgments, and those that are gone before you pronounced woes and judgments; but the judgments of the Lord God are not come upon us yet.

Wenlock.—Be not proud, neither let your spirits be lifted up; God doth but wait till the measure of your iniquity be filled up, and that you have run your ungodly race, then will the wrath of God come upon you to the uttermost; and as for thy part, it hangs over thy head, and is near to be poured down upon thee, and shall come as a thief in the night suddenly, when thou thinkest not of it. By what law will ye put me to death?

Court.—We have a law, and by our law you are to die.

Wenlock.—So said the Jews of Christ: we have a law, and by our law he ought to die. Who empowered you to make that law?

Court.—We have a patent, and are patentees; judge whether we have not power to make laws?

Wenlock.—How! have you power to make laws repugnant to the laws of England?

Governor.—Nay.

Wenlock.—Then you are gone beyond your bounds, and have forfeited your patent, and this is more than you can answer. Are you subjects to the king, yea or nay?

Sec. Rawson.—What will you infer from that; what good will that do you?

Wenlock.—If you are, say so; for in your petition to the king, you desire that he will protect you, and that you may be worthy to kneel among his loyal subjects.

Court.—Yes.

Wenlock.—So am I, and for any thing I know, am as good as you, if not better; for if the king did but know your hearts as God knows them, he would see that your hearts are as rotten towards him, as they are towards God. Therefore, seeing that you and I are subjects to the king, I demand to be tried by the laws of my own nation.

Court.—You shall be tried by a bench and a jury.

Wenlock.—That is not the law, but the manner of it; for if you will be as good as your word, you must set me at liberty, for I never heard or read of any law that was in England to hang Quakers.

Governor.—There is a law to hang Jesuits.

Wenlock.—If you put me to death, it is not because I go under the name of a Jesuit, but a Quaker; therefore I do appeal to the laws of my own nation.

Court.—You are in our hand, and have broken our laws, and we will try you.

Wenlock.—Your will is your law; and what you have power to do, that you will do: and seeing that the jury must go forth on my life, this I have to say to you in the fear of the living God: jury, take heed what you do, for you swear by the living God, that you will true trial make, and just verdict give, according to the evidence. Jury look for your evidence: what have I done to deserve death? Keep your hands out of innocent blood.

A Juryman.—It is good counsel.

The jury went out, but having received their lesson, soon returned, and brought in their verdict—*Guilty.*

Wenlock.—I deny all guilt, for my conscience is clear in the sight of God.

Governor.—The jury hath condemned thee.

Wenlock.—The Lord doth justify me; who art thou that condemnest?

Then the court proceeded to vote as to the sentence of death,

to which several of them—viz. Richard Russel and others—would not consent, the innocence and stedfastness of the man having prevailed upon them in his favor. There happened also a circumstance, during this trial, which could not but affect men of any tenderness, or consideration; which was, that a letter was sent to the court, from Edward Wharton, signifying—That whereas they had banished him on pain of death, yet he was at home, in his own house, in Salem; and therefore proposing that they would take off their wicked sentence from him, that he might go about his occasions, out of their jurisdiction. This circumstance, however affecting to others, did only enrage Endicot, the Governor, who was very much displeased; and, in much anger, cried out, "I could find in my heart to go home."

Wenlock.—It were better for thee to be at home than here, for thou art about a bloody piece of work.

Governor.—You that will not consent, record it. I thank God I am not afraid to give judgment. Wenlock Christison, hearken to your sentence; you must return unto the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, and there you must be hanged until you be dead, dead, dead, upon the 13th day of June, being the fifth day of the week.

Wenlock.—The will of the Lord be done: in whose will I came amongst you, and in his counsel I stand, feeling his eternal power that will uphold me unto the last gasp, I do not question it. Known be it unto you all, that if you have power to take my life from me, my soul shall enter into everlasting rest, and peace with God, where you yourselves shall never come. And if you have power to take my life from me, the which I do question, I believe you shall never more take Quakers' lives from them: *(note my words.)* Do not think to weary out the living God, by taking away the lives of his servants. What do you gain by it? For the last man you put to death, here are *five* come in his room.* And, if you have power to take away my life from me, God can raise up the same Principle of Life in *ten* of his servants, and send them among you,

*These five were, Elizabeth Hootou, Joane Brooksup, Mary Mallins, Katharine Chatham, and John Burstow.

in my room, that you may have torment upon torment, which is your portion: for there is no peace to the wicked saith my God.

Governor.—Take him away.

So the goalor had him back to prison, where he continued in faith and patience, ready to abide the good pleasure of God concerning him, and to suffer death for a good conscience, as his brethren had done before him. But before the day appointed for his execution, an order of court, probably occasioned by some intelligence from London, of complaints against them, was issued for the enlargement of him and twenty seven others, then in prison for the same testimony.

When one of the Marshals and a constable came to the prison, and told them, they were ordered by the court to make them acquainted with their new law.* Wenlock Christison said, "What means this! Have ye a new law?" They answered, "Yes." "Then," said Wenlock, "you have deceived most people." "Why?" said they. "Because," said Wenlock, "they did think the gallows had been your last weapon. Have you got more yet?" "Yes," said they. "Read it," says Wenlock; which they did. Then Wenlock said, "Your magistrates said, that your law was a good and wholesome law, made for your peace, and the safeguard of your country. What! are your hands now become weak? The power of God is over you all."

Then the prison doors were set open, and Wenlock, with twenty-seven others, turned forth, of whom, Peter Pearson and Judith Brown, were whipped with twenty cruel stripes, through the town of Boston, on their naked backs. Many of their mouths were opened, and they published the Truth among the people. A guard, armed with swords, was appointed by the court to drive them all out of that jurisdiction into the wilderness country; which they performed accordingly.

Of those who were turned out of prison, John Smith, of Salem, and his wife, determining to return to their own home, from whence they had been kept near two years, were met by Bellingham, the deputy-governor, who sent them again to prison.

* This new law was, for sending them away out of their jurisdiction; and if they returned, whipping them from town to town.

Not long after, John Chamberlain, and George Wilson, both inhabitants of Boston, returned thither again; but were presently apprehended, and, according to their new law, sentenced to be tied to the cart's tail, and whipped through three towns into the wilderness, which was cruelly executed, especially at the last of the three, where the executioner had provided a cruel instrument, with which he miserably tore their flesh; which instrument they would have bought to send to England, for the novelty of the cruelty, but that was not permitted. George Wilson, after his whipping at Boston, being loosed, fell on his knees and prayed, which the cruel executioner seeing, took him by the collar and pulled him down. The said John Chamberlain had been convinced of the Truth by beholding the godly end of W. Robinson and M. Stevenson; and in less than two years after, besides being imprisoned and banished, he suffered nine cruel whippings; viz. at three several towns, three times at each of them; through all which he was supported with courage and cheerfulness.

About this time, Josiah Southick, [who was banished on pain of death,] returned home again from Old England. He appeared manfully at Boston, in the face of his persecutors, and was clapped up in the house of correction there, for about nine weeks; then he was brought before a court of assistants, in September, 1661, where the governor told him, that he was to have been tried for his life, but that they had made a late law to save his life, which, he said, was a mercy to him. Josiah asked them, whether they had not as good take his life now, as to whip him after their manner, twelve or fourteen times, at a cart's tail, through their towns, and then put him to death afterward?

They answered him with a flout, that perhaps by that time an order might come to save his life; for they were under some apprehensions of such an order from the king, which came not long after, and was thought to have saved ths lives of him and many others, whom they would otherwise have proceeded to destroy. Then they passed sentence upon him, and issued the following order for its execution:—

To the Constables of Boston.

"You are, by virtue of an order of the court of assistants, held at Boston 3rd instant, required to repair with the executioner unto the prison, and there forthwith take the person of Josiah Southick, a banished Quaker; and the executioner is to take him, and strip him to the girdle upward, and to tie him to a cart's tail, and whip him ten stripes out of Boston, and deliver him to the constable of Rocksbury, who is also to cause him to be tied to the cart's tail, and to whip him through Rocksbury, with ten stripes as aforesaid, and then deliver him to the constable of Dedham, who is also required to whip him at the cart's tail with ten stripes as aforesaid, and to discharge him out of our jurisdiction. Make your several returns on the backside of the warrant to the secretary forthwith.—Dated at Boston, the 9th of September, 1661."

Sentence being given, Josiah, with his arms stretched out, and his hands spread before them, said, "Here is my body, if you want a farther testimony of the Truth I profess, take it and tear it to pieces, it is freely given up; and for your sentence I matter it not. And indeed," he said, "their sentence was no more terrifying to him, than if they had blown up a feather in the air; and said, take heed, it hurteth him not. And surely tongue cannot express," said he, "nor declare the goodness and love of God to his suffering people." And while part of the sentence was executed upon him at Boston with much cruelty, he sang to the praise of God, declaring, they that know God to be their strength, cannot fear what man can do. He was whipped again the same night at Rocksbury, and the next morning at Dedham, the executioner doing his office with all possible severity. From thence he was carried fifteen miles from any town into the wilderness, and there discharged.

Nevertheless he returned with a friend that accompanied him; and though his body was miserably torn with stripes, yet the power of the Lord supporting him, he travelled above thirty miles that night, and came to his own home.

By this time, application having been made to the king, the following letter from him was obtained:—

"CHARLES R.—Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having been informed that several of our subjects among you, called Quakers, have been and are imprisoned by you, whereof some have been executed, and others (as hath been represented unto us) are in danger to undergo the like, we have thought fit to signify our pleasure in their behalf for the future; and do require, that if there be any of those people called Quakers amongst you, now already condemned to suffer death, or other corporeal punishment, or that are imprisoned, or obnoxious to the like condemnation, you are to forbear to proceed any further, but that you forthwith send the said persons (whether condemned or imprisoned) over to this our kingdom of England, together with their respective crimes or offences laid to their charge, to the end such course may be taken with them here, as shall be agreeable to our laws and their demerits. And for so doing, these our letters shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge.—Given at our court at Whitehall, the 9th day of September, 1661, in the thirteenth year of our reign.

Subscribed to our trusty and well-beloved John Endicot, Esq.; and to all and every other the governor or governors of our plantation of New England, and of the colonies thereunto belonging, that now are, or hereafter shall be; and to all and every the ministers and officers of our said plantation and colonies whatever, within the continent of New England. By his majesty's command,

WILLIAM MORRIS."

In procuring the aforesaid letter or mandamus from the king, Edward Burroughs was a principal instrument, for when the news of W. Leddra's death came to the ears of the Friends at London, and of the danger many others of their persuasion were in, they were much concerned, especially the said E. Burroughs, who speedily repaired to the court, and having got access to the king's presence, told him there was a vein of innocent blood opened in his dominions, which, if it were not stopped, might overrun all. To which the king replied, "But I will stop that vein." Then E. Burroughs desired him to do it speedily, for there was danger of many others being soon put to death. The king answered, as speedy as you will; and ordered the secretary to be called, and the mandamus to be forthwith granted. A few days after, E. Burroughs went again to the king, desiring dispatch of the business. The king said he had no present occasion to send a ship thither; but if they would send one, they might as soon as they would. The king

also granted his deputation to Samuel Shattock, who had been banished thence, to carry his mandamus to New England. Whereupon an agreement was made with Ralph Goldsmith, one of the said people called Quakers, and master of a good ship, for £300 to sail forthwith. He immediately prepared for his voyage, and in about six weeks arrived in Boston harbour, on a first day of the week.

The townsmen seeing a ship with English colours, soon came on board, and asked for the captain. Ralph Goldsmith told them, he was the commander. They asked whether he had any letters. He answered—yes: but withal told them, he would not deliver them that day. So they returned on shore again, and reported, that there were many Quakers come, and that Samuel Shattock (who they knew had been banished on pain of death) was among them. But they knew nothing of his errand or authority. Thus all was kept close, and none of the ship's company suffered to go on shore that day. Next morning R. Goldsmith, the commander, with S. Shattock, the king's deputy, went on shore; and sending the boat back to the ship, they two went directly through the town to the governor's house, and knocked at the door; he sending a man to know their business, they sent him word, that their message was from the king of England, and that they would deliver it to none but himself. Then they were admitted to go in, and the governor came to them, and commanded S. Shattock's hat to be taken off; and having received the deputation and the mandamus, he laid off his own hat; and ordering S. Shattock's hat to be given him again, perused the papers, and then went out to the deputy-governor's, bidding the king's deputy and the master of the ship to follow him. Being come to the deputy-governor, and having consulted him, he returned to the aforesaid two persons, and said, "we shall obey his majesty's command." After this the master of the ship gave liberty to his passengers to come on shore, which they did, and had a religious meeting with their friends of the town, where they returned praises to God for his mercy manifested in this wonderful deliverance.

Not long after, the following order of the council at Boston was issued:—

"*To William Salter, keeper of the prison at Boston.*

"You are required, by authority and order of the general court, forthwith to release and discharge the Quakers, who at present are in your custody; see that you dont neglect this.

By order of the court,

EDWARD RAWSON, Secretary."

"*Boston, 9th September,* 1661."

During the whole course of this persecution, the principal actors of it stopped their ears, and hardened their hearts against all reproof, rejecting and despising the many predictions and warnings given them, in order to have prevented their effusion of the blood of the innocent, and the dreadful consequences of the guilt they would thereby incur. Those predictions and warnings were abundantly verified by such an unusual concurrence of judgments and calamities, both *personal* and *national*, as did visibly manifest the Divine displeasure against the *oppressors* of his people, of which the following particular instances were remarkable:—

John Endicot, governor of the Massachusets colony, a principal promoter of the persecution there; soon after he had signed a warrant for the barbarous whipping of Edward Wharton, was visited with a filthy and loathsome disease, of which he died most miserably. It was observed, that at the time when this governor lay on his death-bed, the common executioner or hangman, who, by his commands, had imbrued his hands in the blood of the innocent, was also cut off, and died in great horror of mind, and torment of body. Their deaths thus concurring were remarked by some, who said, "Who would have thought the head and tail should go so near together."

Humphrey Adderton, who, at the trial of Wenlock Christison, did, as it were, bid defiance to heaven, by saying to Wenlock, "You pronounce woes and judgments, and those that are gone before you pronounced woes and judgments; but the judgments of the Lord God are not come upon us yet," was suddenly surprised. He was an officer or major of the soldiery; and having been, on a certain day, exercising his men with much pomp and ostentation, he was returning home in the evening near the place were they usually loosed the Quakers from the cart, after they had whipped them; his horse, suddenly affrighted, threw him with such violence, that he instantly died, presenting a spectacle of mutilation almost too horrible for description. He being taken up and brought into the court-house, the place where he had been active in sentencing the inno-

cent to death, his blood ran through the floor, exhibiting to the spectators a shocking instance of the Divine vengeance against a daring and hardened persecutor, thus made a fearful example of that Divine judgment which, when forewarned of, he had openly despised and treated with disdain.

John Norton, one of their chief priests, a principal exciter of the magistrates, to persecute the innocent, and put them to death, was cut off by a sudden and unexpected stroke; for having been at his worship in the forepart of the day, and intending to go thither again in the afternoon, as he was walking in his own house, he was observed to fetch a great groan; and leaning his head against the chimney-piece, was heard to say, "The hand, or judgment, of the Lord is upon me," and so sunk down and spake no more; and had fallen into the fire, had not an ancient man, then present, prevented it.

John Danfort, a member of their church, and captain of their castle at Boston, as he lay in the heat of the day upon his bed, was struck dead in a strange manner, by thunder and lightning.

John Webb, who, with armed men, led Mary Dyer to her execution, as he, with others, was busy in killing a whale, or great fish, was on a sudden, after a strange manner, carried into the sea and drowned.

Timothy Dalton, a persecuting priest at Hampton, and his brother Philemon, both inveterate opposers of the people called Quakers, were soon taken away: the said Philemon was killed by the fall of a tree on his leg; and his brother by another visitation. This priest had called it blasphemy to say, the Light within was the Light of Christ.

Captain Johnson, who led forth W. Leddra to be put to death, was afterwards taken with a distemper which deprived him of his reason and understanding as a man.

Marshal Brown, of Ipswich, a rapacious plunderer of the Quakers' goods, was soon after cast upon a bed of languishing, where he lay in great affliction of body and horror of conscience, and so departed this life.

Edward Norris, a priest at Salem, who excited the rulers and people there against the innocent, saying, "What they did to the Quakers was not persecution, but prosecution," at a time when he was vindicating the proceedings against them in a sermon to the people, was suddenly struck dumb in his pulpit; and after a short time died.

Priest Mitchell, of Cambridge, soon after he had endeavoured to stir up the rulers there to persecution, was smitten by the hand of the Lord; and it was related of him, that his tongue, while he was yet alive, was turned exceeding black in his mouth; and in that condition he died.

Richard Bellingham, often before mentioned for his violently persecuting this people even to death, having completed the measure of his iniquity, ended his government with his life, being bereft of his understanding, and dying distracted.

Old Priest Wilson, who reviled the servants of the Lord as they were led forth to be put to death, was also, by the hand of the Lord, swept away, as is believed, in a remarkable manner.

Sundry others, not here mentioned, hath the hand of the Lord visited with judgments upon themselves and upon the fruit of their bodies, taking away the lives of divers of their first-born by unusual deaths; and from year to year, to this day, [1702] since they murdered the servants of the Lord, hath the hand of justice blasted their corn in the fields; their wheat when in the ear near to blossom, being in a strange manner smitten with death at the root, and so wither away; and become so loathsome, (being cut down) that the beasts of the field care not to eat it."—*New England Judged*, page 485.

Hear a description of the terrible calamities and distresses which, for a long series of years, continued upon this Province, as transcribed from Cotton Mather's History of New England, (printed in 1702) *viz*:—

"For now more than twenty years, the blasting strokes of heaven upon the secular affairs of this country, have been such as rather to abate than enlarge the growth of it. That this blasting of the principal grain to continue to this day, as a just judgment, is no doubt for their wickedness and cruelty, in persecuting and putting to death the servants of the Lord.

The many calamities which have ever since been wasting of the country, have so nipped the growth of it, that its latter progress hath held no proportion with what was from the beginning.—The calamities that have carried off the inhabitants of our several towns, have not been all of one sort, nor have all our towns had an equal share in any sort: pestilential sicknesses have made fearful havock in divers places, where the sound have not perhaps been enough to tend the sick, while others have not had one touch from the angel of death; and the sword hath cut off scores in sundry places, when others it may be have not lost a man by that avenger.

There have been several years wherein the terrible famine hath terribly struck the town in the face. The angel of death hath often shot the arrow of death into the midst of the town: the small-pox hath especially four times been a great plague upon us.—Never was any town under the copes of heaven more liable to be laid in ashes, either through the carelessness or wickedness of them that sleep in it.

Ten times hath the fire* made notable ruins among us, and our good servant been almost our master.

Ah Boston! thou hast seen the vanity of all worldly possessions: one fatal morning which laid fourscore of thy dwelling-houses, and seventy of thy warehouses in a ruinous heap, not nineteen years ago, gave thee to read it in fiery characters; and a huge fleet of thy vessels, if they were altogether, that have miscarried in the late war, has given thee to read more of it."

He tells how the consuming wrath of God is every day on the young men, saying, "New England has been like a tottering house, the very foundations of it have been shaking, but the house thus over-setting by the wrath of God, hath been like Job's house: It falls upon the young men, and they are dead. The disasters on our young folks have been so multiplied, that there are few parents among us, but what will go with wounded hearts down unto their graves: their daily moans are, Ah! my son, cut off in his youth! my son! my son!

By land, some of the principal grains, especially our wheat and pease, fell under an accountable blast, from which we are not yet even unto this day delivered: and besides that constant frown of heaven upon our husbandry recurring every year, few years have passed wherein either worms, or droughts, or some consuming disaster, have not befallen the labour of the husbandman. By sea we were visited with multiplied shipwrecks; enemies preyed upon our vessels and our sailors; and the affairs of the merchant were clogged with losses abroad, or fires breaking forth in the chief seats of trades at home, wasted their substance with yet more costly desolations. Nor did the land and sea more proclaim the controversy of our God against us, than that other element of the air, by the contagious vapours whereof several pestilential sicknesses did sometimes become epidemical among us; yea, the judgments of God having done the first part of the moth upon us, proceeded to do the part of a lion in lamentable wars, wherein the barbarous Indians cruelly butchered many hundreds of our inhabitants, and scattered whole towns with miserable ruins."

W. Sewel, the Friends' Historian, says: "Yet one thing remarkable I may mention here, which, when I first heard, I could not fully give credit to; but thinking it worth the while to make a narrow inquiry into it, I did so, not only by writing, but also from the mouths of persons that had been eye-witnesses, or had been informed by such; and from these I got this concurring testimony,

* This answers to the prediction of George Wilson, who, when he was carried to prison there, cried in the streets, saying, "The Lord is coming with fire and sword to plead with Boston."

viz., that the country about Boston was formerly a very fruitful soil, that produced excellent wheat; but that since the time that this town had been stained with the blood of the Quakers, (so called,) no wheat, &c. would grow to perfection within twenty miles, though the ground had been ploughed and sown several times; for sometimes what was sown was spoiled by vermin or insects; at other times it grew up, but scarcely yielded more than was sown, and so could not countervail the charge; and in another year, the expected harvest was quashed by another accident; and these disappointments continuing many years, the people at length grew weary of making further trial, and so left the ground untilled; notwithstanding that twenty miles off from Boston the soil is fruitful, and yields very good corn. But there having been so many reiterated instances of unfruitfulness nearer the town, ancient people that are alive still, and remember the first times, generally agree in their opinion that this is a judgment from heaven, and a curse on the land, because of the shedding of innocent blood at Boston. This relation I had from so many credible persons, (though the one knew nothing of the other, as differing much in time) yet what they told me did so well agree in the main, that I could not but believe it, though I do not use to be credulous; and therefore I have been the more exact in my inquiry, so that I can no longer question the case; but it seems to me as a punishment on that blood-thirstiness which now hath ceased long ago."

JOSEPH OXLEY'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE JUDGMENT WHICH HAS COME ON THE LAND ROUND BOSTON, 1771.

J. O. says, at Boston, "they seem to be stained as with the blood of the martyrs. An ancient Friend at Casko, James Wilmslow, told me his father would often be telling him of the execution and sufferings of our dear friends at Boston; that his father was at that time apprenticed in that town, and saw them all hanged. I saw the place near to where they suffered, which is now pretty much laid by buildings. I have also to remark, what before I have read and also been informed, that whereas before our Friends were put to death in this place, the ground used to produce very good crops of wheat, even near to the town; but ever since that time, there has not been any of account. Benjamin Bagnall, an ancient and honourable Friend at Boston, at whose house I lodged, told me that one of his neighbours related to him, that he himself, but three years ago, had a very pleasing prospect of a very good crop of wheat, but when it came into the ear it mildewed, and came to little or nothing. I also made my observation, as being on my religious travel in those

parts, in the seventh month, 1771, and that there was no wheat growing within *twenty* miles of the town of Boston."—*Pike and Ozley : J. Barclay's Series*, pages 365, 366.

JOHN CHURCHMAN, who paid a religious visit to *New England*, in 1742, says, he saw wheat in that country which looked to be well grown, but in the ear, instead of grain, there was little else than a small black smut in the form of a grain : and he further relates, that, two persons being in *Boston*, had a curiosity to see the old prison, from which the Friends were led to be hanged, for their religious testimony and principles. An inhabitant of Boston going with them, on their arrival, one of the party happening to say, "Is this the jail where the Friends lay who were hanged" was unexpectedly answered by an aged female, who sat at the door, knitting. Her reply was,—"Yes it is ! and *we* feelingly know it ; for a curse has been on the land ever since ; so that it will not bear wheat without a blasting ; and we are beholden to other colonies for bread."

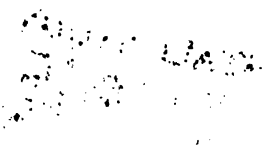
[*It is believed that the effect of this remarkable judgment is continued to the present day.—Ed.*]

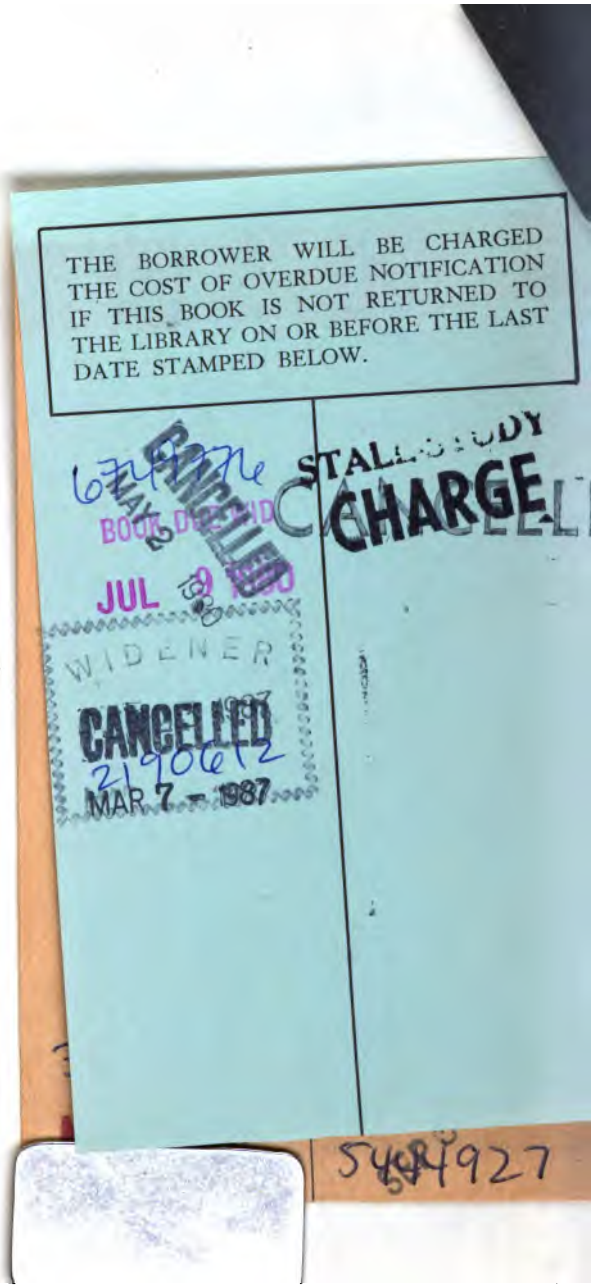
Thus were the inhabitants of New England in an extraordinary manner afflicted and punished. Why such a series of direful calamities, as famine, pestilence, fire, and the sword, should, in so distinguished and exemplary a manner, concur to the destruction of that people above all others, is an enquiry naturally arising from the premises. Those who are disposed to make the enquiry, may be assisted therein by perusing the accounts given in "Besse's Collection of the Sufferings of the people called Quakers," of the grievous persecution the Friends had to endure for the sake of their conscience and religion. If, upon a mature consideration of the nature of their sufferings, and the causes and circumstances attending the same, it shall appear that they were persecuted and put to death, being innocent and righteous ; that they laid down their lives in opposition to unjust and wicked laws, formed against them by the rulers, priests, and people of New England, with a malicious design of

rooting out, and totally extirpating those who openly testified against them and their corruptions; that they were supported through all their afflictions by a Divine power; that they overcame death itself through faith and patience, and finished their course as saints and martyrs of Christ;—it may also seem not altogether improbable, that the judgments and calamities which followed, were manifestations of the Divine displeasure for a national guilt, incurred through the wickedness of their laws and law-makers, who had deliberately destroyed the righteous, and shed their innocent blood. A crying sin, for which the Divine vengeance hath visited nations, as is evident by the testimony of Holy Writ: (Joel iii. 19) "Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the vengeance against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land." So also the destruction of Jerusalem is ascribed (Lam. iv. 13) to the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her *priests*, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her. But we presume not in this case to make any positive determination, but rather in lowliness and humility of mind, to acknowledge, with the Psalmist, that the judgments of the Lord are a great deep, (Psalm xxxvi. 6;) and with the apostle Paul in an holy admiration to say, (Rom. xi. 33, 34, 35, 36,) "O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." Amen.

THE END.

JOHN HARRISON, PRINTER, MANCHESTER.

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